

**English Tsunami in Indonesian**

E. Sadtono

**Universitas Ma Chung, Malang, Indonesia**

[sadtono@gmail.com](mailto:sadtono@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

English has successfully overwhelmed Indonesian like tsunami as an imperialistic language. The meaning of imperialism here, however, differs from the conventional meaning as it is invited imperialism, not coerced imperialism. The influence of English in Indonesian is discussed in terms of modernization, globalization, economy, and history. The linguistic tsunami effects are overwhelming, staggering, and unstoppable. The data for this article were collected from various sources, and it was found that the number of English words (pure and modified) is indeed confounding. Virtually English words have penetrated all walks of life. Unfortunately, there is no way we can prevent English influence on Indonesian, it is simply inevitable and we cannot do anything about it. Seen from linguistic purism, we have lost the battle in fighting off English influence; but seen from the eye of a descriptive linguist, it is an unpreventable historical phenomenon. It is a linguistic dynamism in which language is altered and enriched by a continuous input from other languages, the most influential language being the major donor of loanwords of the receiving language. If it is considered a problem, the solution is to change our attitude to realize that any living language continues undergoing modifications and we should be willing to accommodate them. It is the dialectics of world history.

**Keywords:** loanword, linguistic imperialism, linguistic influence, historical phenomenon.

### **Introduction**

For all intents and purposes, English loanwords are found in all sizable advertisements in Indonesian newspapers. By English loanword is here meant any English word, original or adapted, that is used in Indonesian. This paper discusses English loanwords in Indonesian and their ramifications.

### **Linguistic Imperialism**

Linguistic imperialism or language imperialism is defined as a concept that “involves the transfer of a dominant language to other people. The transfer is essentially a demonstration of power -- traditionally, military power but also, in the modern world, economic power – and aspects of the dominant culture are usually transferred along with the language.” (Linguistic imperialism.Wikipedia).Phillipson (1992) defines English linguistic imperialism as ‘the dominance of asserted and retained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages (paraphrased by Wikipedia). My definition of English imperialism is the continuous use of English, adopted, adapted, realized and retained by Indonesian society without any coercion.

### **English as a global lingua franca**

‘Fortunately,’ English is now a global lingua franca meaning that it belongs to ‘everybody’ so it is inappropriate to accuse English speaking countries of committing the crime of linguistic imperialism.

The fact that English as a language carries economic power is indisputable, resulting in the undermining of other languages, including Indonesian, as it is impossible today to implement economic policy without using English.

Usually the term ‘imperialism’ implies coercion and imposition by a superior power on an inferior power, for example the Dutch imposed Dutch on Indonesians during the Dutch colonial period before WW II, and the Japanese imposed Japanese during the Japanese occupation of Indonesia during WW II. In this discussion, it is not coerced imperialism, but invited imperialism.

English ‘imperialism’ in Indonesia is virtually invited by Indonesian government and people. If English is hypothetically defined as ‘imperialist’, by imposing the subject ‘English’ on school curriculum, the government in fact invites imperialism; and sending their children to English-as-a-medium-of-instruction schools, private English courses, etc. parents unconsciously send an invitation to English to ‘imperialize’ their children also.

One of the major reasons for borrowing English words is globalization: the pressure of globalization demands that we use English for global communication, so knowing English is virtually a *sine qua non*. In other words we have to invite English, but then it is out of control and unknowingly becomes insidiously imperialistic. It is undeniable that English is very important as a tool to conduct business, master skills, acquire knowledge in different fields, and keep up with the latest developments in virtually any field and world affairs. In addition, it is also a crucial instrument to communicate with people worldwide.

However, there is the downside of learning English, that is to be snobbish and to show off that one is educated and belongs to middle-class or upper-class family; for example quite a number of wedding invitations are bilingual, English and Indonesian, even knowing that no foreigners would appear.

Another downside is the loss of Indonesian as mother tongue. It has happened in Surabaya where some children who go to school using English as the medium of instruction are unable to use Indonesian. It is plainly going overboard.

### **The 'culprits' of English imperialism**

The 'culprits' of English imperialism are economy, modernization and globalization, time saving or laziness, the media, Indonesian psyche, and lack of self-confidence.

**Economy.** 'The stomach cannot wait' is the essential of economy. The simple saying reverberates into very complicated things, including language. Language popularity, survival and death depend on economy. If a language does not bring economic benefits, the language will first become an endangered species, and sooner or later it will die. Quite a number of indigenous languages have died because their speakers did not benefit economically from their existence. They will switch to another language that gives them more economic benefits, it is a world wide phenomenon. In Indonesia, speakers of vernaculars benefit more from Indonesian than from their own mother tongue. To some extent, a certain number of influential educated Indonesian speakers get additional benefit more from English than from Indonesian, thus the perpetuation of English influence.

**Modernization and globalization.** Modernization and globalization needs one means of communication, and by an accident of history, English happens to become the world's tool for communication (*lingua franca*). History tells us that 'global' or dominant language changes, for example Latin was a dominant language during the Middle Age in many countries in Europe, and Russian was a dominant language in many countries in Eastern Europe due to its military power until the USSR disintegrated. Different factors contribute to the dominance of language, but they are mainly economic power, military power, and religion.

**Time saving or laziness.** People prefer using English to Indonesian because to some extent English loanwords are more economical thus saving time. Indeed there are English words or phrases when translated into Indonesian become cumbersome, such as the acronym of KKN ('korupsi' - corruption, 'kolusi' - collusion, and 'nepotisme' - nepotism); the acronym would be lengthy when translated into Indonesian. Other examples from the world of fashion: 'statement necklace,' 'high waisted pants,' 'high waisted trousers,' and 'fitted tailoring,' – these would be quite lengthy if translated into Indonesian.

**The media.** The media are the 'main culprit' of English imperialism, jokingly they are the tools of imperialism. It is true that the pen is mightier than the sword and in this case the pen is mightier than any court injunction to protect linguistic purism.

The following is a discussion on how the media inadvertently spread the English loanwords. The media are the major players in spreading English loanwords, the minor players are scientists and professors who write and teach, sprinkling English words in their writing and lectures, as well as business people when they talk shop. The advertisements in the media also play a major role in spreading English words. Most probably all Indonesian advertisements have English words in them, never mind the grammar. For example a new hotel in Malang, Solaris Hotel, put the words 'Booked now' instead of 'Book now.' Women's magazines or women's sections in a newspaper or general magazines are 'notorious' for using English words and phrases in their articles as they are so many of them (see appendices below). It is now difficult to distinguish by its cover whether a magazine is in Indonesian or English as most of them bear English titles.

There are roughly two kinds of media: national and regional. The national media have first rate reporters who know English well so their quotation of English words is more or less accurate. The regional media, on the other hand, employ reporters whose English proficiency

may be less than the national media reporters. For example, the word ‘gentle’ (should be ‘gentleman’) was used for a parliamentarian who retired from the Parliament (JawaPos, April 13, 2011). The following day, describing the same person, the daily used ‘bersikap kesatria’ which is the correct translation of ‘gentleman.’ The second reporter or the editor may know English better than the first one.

The national media reporters often interview central government authorities whose English is excellent. Due to the demand of their job, these authorities’ mental diet is in English, they read daily news and the latest developments in their respective fields in English; in addition, they have to entertain foreign visitors practically daily using English. As such it is only understandable that when they speak, they can’t help sprinkling their speech with English words. Not because they want to show off their English proficiency, but simply because due to their mental diet what they have in mind is mostly English words. In other words, the tip of their tongues is virtually full of English words. They may know the Indonesian equivalents, but these equivalents are buried deep in their mind or brain, which may take some time to retrieve. This is particularly true when they talk about their respective fields in which Indonesian has no equivalents yet, for example if the Secretary General of the Department of Communication and Information is explaining about the latest development in communication, he would employ a great deal of English technical terms which have no Indonesian equivalents yet.

The national media reporters would usually be able to follow the interview and write down English words correctly. Due to their deadline to submit their reports to their media, they would not have much time to find the Indonesian equivalents of the English words the interviewees uttered. So the English words creep into the Indonesian media surreptitiously. The public or the readers would simply swallow what is written unquestioningly. And unconsciously they will

absorb the English words well, thus is the first step of the process of English borrowing. Later on these borrowed words would change in terms of their form, pronunciation, lexical and grammatical meaning. For example a change in form: ‘eksekutor’ < English (further abbreviated to E) ‘executor,’ A change in pronunciation: ‘log in’ - /login/ > /lojin/. A change in lexical meaning: ‘nuance’ – ‘nuansa’; ‘nuance’ – ‘a very slight difference’, ‘nuansa’ in Indonesian means ‘sphere, ambience.’ ‘Hostess’ becomes ‘hostes’ [hostès] – which has a negative connotation. A change in grammatical meaning: ‘oil additive’ – ‘oliaditif’ – the structure is unchanged. Such a case can be problematic if it has to be translated into English as it can change the meaning. Another example is the new grammatical construction ‘Honda Motor’. There is then this problem: ‘Honda Motor’ vs. ‘Motor Honda’; ‘Honda Motor’ is a shop selling Honda motorbike spareparts – a new Indonesian construction, whereas ‘motor Honda’ is a Honda motorcycle. This can create a problem in translation. (See elsewhere for further discussion).

The regional and local media reporters are generally speaking less proficient in English than the national media reporters. Many of the regional and local government authorities are also less proficient in English than the central government authorities. When the regional and local media reporters interview regional and local government authorities, the authorities may use English correctly or incorrectly; and the reporters would cite them. When it comes to English words, the reporters would jot them down (or record them), and the result of the interview would be written in the printed media. It is questionable whether the authority being interviewed uses and pronounces the English words correctly and whether the reporters know the English words and whether they can spell them correctly. Once the English words are printed in a newspaper, readers would learn them rightly or wrongly, they simply take the English words in toto, and most of the readers would take it for granted that they are correct. The reporters themselves may



not have time to check the spelling in the dictionary as they are pressed for time to meet the deadline. This is one of the reasons the loanwords are sometimes misspelled.

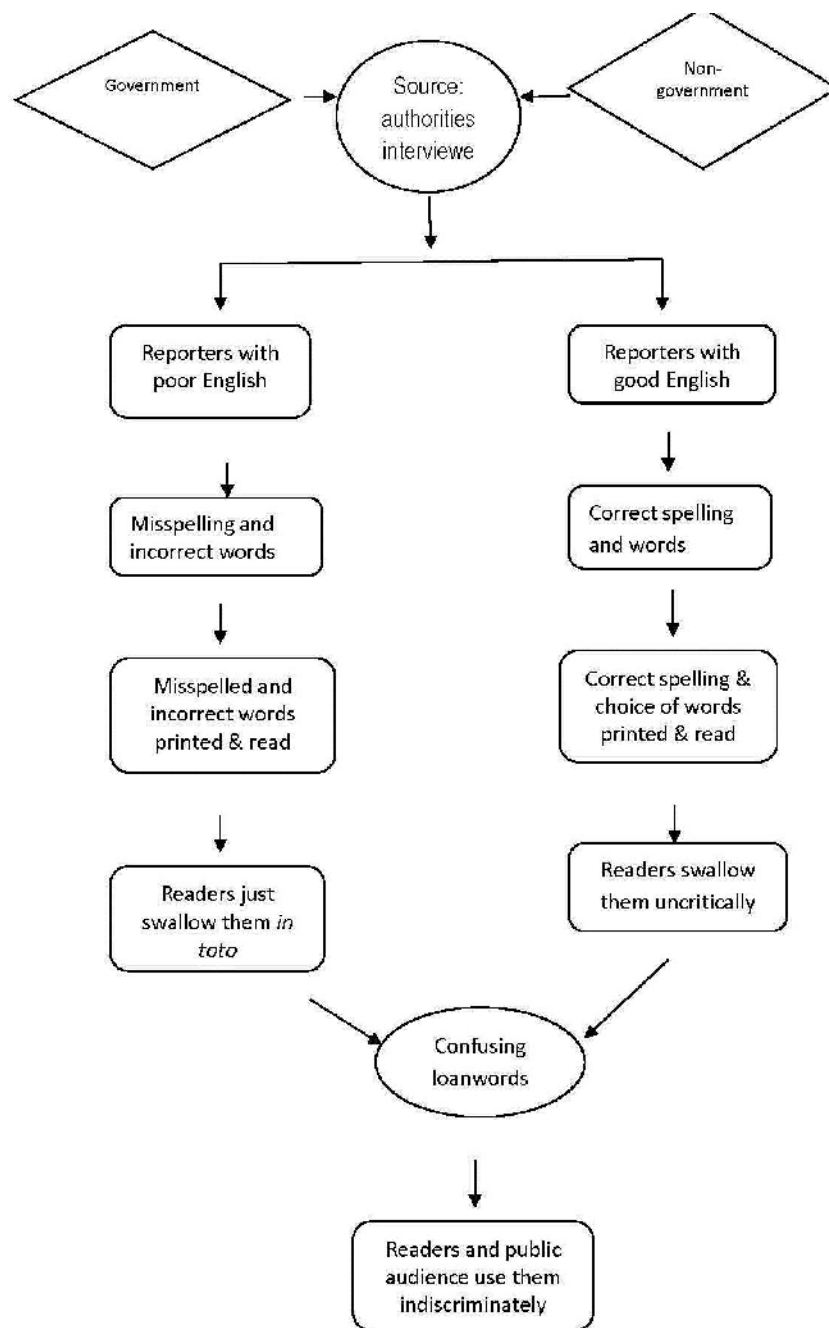


Chart of the spread of loanwords in Indonesian through the media

## **The Indonesian Psyche**

### **Snobbery**

Snobbery is ‘behavior or attitudes which show that you think you are better than other people, because you belong to a higher social class or know much more than they do’ (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2003: 1566). Quite a few Indonesians unconsciously ‘suffer’ from this kind of snobbery because they think that if they can sprinkle their language with English words, people would think that these snobs belong to the middle or upper-middle class. For example the word ‘*kewirausahaan*’ for ‘entrepreneurship’, ‘*kepemimpinan*’ for ‘leadership’, we have already the Indonesian word, but why Indonesians prefer using ‘entrepreneurship’ to ‘*kewirausahaan*,’ or ‘leadership’ to ‘*kepemimpinan*’ remains a mystery to me, probably it is ‘luxury borrowing.’ Another example is wedding invitations, quite a few of them also use English even if they know that they are not going to invite foreigners. I can’t help ascribing such an attitude simply to snobbery.

### **Lack of self-confidence**

Lacking self-confidence may be due to national or collective trait which the Indonesian society has inherited from predecessors who suffered from subjugation and colonialism for a very long time (350 years of Dutch colonialism is more than enough to form a nation’s psyche). Such mental inheritance cannot be taken too lightly, it is there but people may not perceive it and it is difficult to eradicate. The results of such mentality are among others inferiority complex, preference for foreign products, the generalizing stereotypes that Westerners by and large are more superior than their own countrymen, and the ability to speak a foreign (Western) language uplifts one’s social status. This held true during the Dutch colonialism whereby Indonesians who

could speak Dutch felt superior to other Indonesians who could not. Fortunately, the younger generation now does not seem to have the inferiority complex of being Indonesians anymore.

However, it is also the younger generation that insists that English words be used in any business announcement, brochures, pamphlets, banners, etc. It seems that they do not feel satisfied if they do not use English on those materials.

Generally speaking, Indonesians prefer things made outside Indonesia, especially Germany, the UK, Japan, and Korea. One of the reasons is that products made in those countries are really superior to Indonesian-made products.

### **Brief History of English in Indonesia**

English has been taught in Indonesia since pre-World War II during the Dutch colonial time, but exactly when it was initially taught is anybody's guess (Sadtono, 2007). It was taught beginning from junior high school (MULO – Dutch) through senior high school (AMS – Dutch). Indonesian was proclaimed as the national language on 28 October 1928, the Youth Oath Day, but its development was minimal. During WW II, that is during the Japanese occupation for about three and half years (1942 – 1945), English and Dutch were banned. The Japanese Occupation Army instituted Indonesian as the medium of instruction and Japanese was intensively taught. Despite their occupation, Indonesia should be thankful to the Japanese for reinforcing Indonesian as the national language.

When Indonesia gained her independence on August 17, 1945 Indonesian was already on a firm footing and from then on it has bloomed to become a full fledged language as it is today. It has been so successful that in fact it is one of the major obstacles to the success of the teaching of English in Indonesia as nowadays virtually anything can be found in Indonesian. In other words, Indonesian can satisfy the primary and secondary needs of Indonesians, and students now can

graduate with bachelor's and some master's degrees without knowing English. The average score of doctoral candidates on 'TOEFL' test at Airlangga University is 415 which is far below the requirement (Eliyana, 2013, personal communication). The success of Indonesian is actually a mixed blessing, on one hand Indonesians now can learn almost anything using just Indonesian, on the other hand Indonesian has been 'suffering' from the never-ending onslaught of English.

### **Foreign Language Borrowings into Indonesian**

Indonesian is actually no stranger to loanwords or borrowing from other languages (Loanwords. Wikipedia) such as Arabic, Chinese (mostly Hokkien), Sanskrit, Persian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English, Javanese and other indigenous languages in Indonesia. Only recently did English inundate Indonesian with English words. The loanwords have influenced and enriched Indonesian through different channels such as trade, religion, colonialism, education, and deliberate adoption.

Sanskrit words are abundant in Indonesian due to early Hindu and Buddhist influence mostly through Javanese. Indian traders, especially Tamil, contributed Sanskrit words as well (List of loanwords in Indonesian. Wikipedia), for example 'asmara' ('smara') – love; 'bahasa' ('bhasa') – language, 'bahaya' ('bhaya') – danger; 'aksara' (aksara) – letters, alphabet.

Since ancient times, Chinese and Indonesians have conducted a great deal of trade, and inevitably Chinese words, mainly Hokkien, are borrowed into Indonesian. In addition, a big number of Chinese migrated from China to Indonesia and as a result they also contributed Chinese words to Indonesian, e.g. 'bakmie' ('bamien') – noodles, 'bakso' ('ba so') – meat balls, 'lumpia' ('lunpia') – spring rolls.

A sizeable number of Arabic words are also found in Indonesian and this is mainly attributable to trade and Islam. The majority of graduates from Moslem schools (Pesantren) still

pronounce Arabic loanwords using Arabic pronunciation. Examples of Arabic loanwords: ‘alam’ – nature, ‘asli’ (‘asl’) – genuine, ‘badan’ (‘baddan’) – body.

Persian traders also visited Indonesia and consequently there are few Persian words borrowed into Indonesian, for example ‘anggur’ (‘angur’ – grapes), ‘bandar’ – port, ‘gandum’ – wheat, ‘pasar’ – market, ‘sihir’ – black magic power, and ‘nakhoda’ – captain of a ship.

Brief Portuguese colonialization in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and trade also contributed some loanwords such as ‘almari’ (‘armario’) – wardrobe, ‘armada’- ‘armada, fleet,’ ‘bendera’ (‘bandeira’) –flag.

Vernaculars in Indonesian: Maluku ‘beta’ – I; Batak ‘molek’ – beautiful; Nias ‘Anda’ - you; Sundanese ‘anjangsana’ – visit; Minangkabau ‘abang’ – brother, ‘ranah’ – area, ‘gadis’ – virgin girl; Javanese ‘kesurupan’ – in trance, ‘luhur’ – noble, etc. Javanese, having the largest number of population, has numerous words borrowed into Indonesian.

### **Indonesian Society as Recipient of Loanwords**

Indonesian society can be roughly divided into upper-class, middle-class, and lower class. Indonesian society is also dynamic going hand in hand with the economy of the country and it seems that the middle class is growing somewhat fast as the economy is improving. In terms of language use, the discussion in this paper is directed towards the middle class and the upper class who know English. Knowing English is here assumed to be the ability to read and understand English to a large extent; otherwise they would not be able to understand the contents of major media publication using Indonesian mixed with English lexicon.

### **Theoretical background of borrowing**

Scholars have long discussed loanwords or borrowing as word borrowing is part and parcel of language (Grzega, 2003: 22-42). Grzega expounded loanwords in the following discussion. They divide borrowing into two categories “necessity borrowing” and “luxury borrowing,” and the motives frequently quoted are “need to designate new (imported) things” and “prestige.” To designate a new electronic gadget is an example of necessity borrowing, e.g. ‘laptop,’ ‘notebook,’ etc. Using an English word instead of its Indonesian equivalent is a luxury borrowing, e.g. ‘leadership’ instead of ‘kepemimpinan.’ The other motives are as follows:

**Need to differentiate.** There are special nuances of expression, including stylistic variation. I would personally add that writers want to vary their language because they are bored with using the same Indonesian words all the time.

**Need to play with words.** It is probably not applicable to Indonesians using English unless it is intended to make jokes, for example ‘Dewi Ayu tidak suka es’- literally ‘Dewi Ayu doesn’t like ice.’ Actually it is a mnemonic device for remembering a grammatical rule (“They’, ‘we’, ‘I’, ‘you’ shouldn’t use ‘s’ with present tense verbs).

**Homonymic clashes.** They are clashes between two words which have the same pronunciation but different spellings, for example ‘mail’ and ‘male.’ This may not be applicable to English loanwords borrowed into Indonesian.

**Loss of affectiveness.** Some words, or seen from a juxtaposed viewpoint, have emotionality of a specific concept. In Indonesia, people would mostly borrow words from their own mother tongue, that is indigenous languages in Indonesia, for affectiveness of words, rather than English.

**Feeling of insufficiently.** It differentiated conceptual fields. For example, the necessity to differentiate ‘software’ (*‘perangkat lunak’*) from ‘hardware’ (*‘perangkat keras’*) or rise of a specific conceptual field, for example ‘outsourcing.’

**Attraction of a borrowing.** Due to an already borrowed word (analogy) ,for example, the English morpheme ‘-ity’ becomes ‘-tas’ in Indonesian: ‘legality’- ‘legalitas,’ ‘faculty’ – ‘fakultas,’ and so by analogy the suffix ‘-itas’ is extrapolated and applied to other English words which do not have the suffix ‘-ity’ such as ‘rutinitas’ < E. \*routinity, etc.(See discussion on this elsewhere).

**Political or cultural power.** Dutch colonialized Indonesia for around 350 years. Dutch then was taught as the Dutch domination was very powerful, resulting in numerous Dutch loanwords in Indonesian.

**Bilingual character of a society.** Indonesian society is a bilingual society. Therefore, borrowing words from another language is common.

**Negative evaluation.** The aim of appearing derogatory or positive evaluation and need for a euphemistic expression, e.g. ‘ML’ – ‘making love,’ ‘Mr.P’ – ‘penis,’ ‘Miss V’ – ‘vagina’ are already used in Indonesian as euphemisms.

**Laziness of the translator.** Often, translators are either lazy or lack of lexicographical means For example, ‘diskon’ (‘discount’) is shorter (two syllables are more economical) than ‘potongan harga’ (five syllables); an example of lack of lexicographical means ‘nepotisme’ < E. ‘nepotism’ – no single equivalent in Indonesian, so it is adopted fully.

**Mere oversight or temporary lack of remembering indigenous names.** This happens to highly educated people whose daily mental diet is English materials (see elsewhere when reporters interview authorities whose Indonesian is interspersed with English words)

**Low frequency of indigenous words.** Words that are hardly used and their instability within a region, e.g. ‘mouse’ (computer) is much more frequently used in Indonesian than the term ‘tetikus.’

### **Loanword classification**

The following is the classification of loanwords based on Betz’s nomenclature and enlarged by Duckworth as quoted in Loanword (Loanword. Wikipedia) into importation, partial substitution and substitution.

#### **Importation**

**Foreign word.** This type of imported words are not integrated. They remain pure in their original spelling, e.g. ‘radio,’ ‘jeep,’ ‘TV,’ ‘mouse,’ ‘monitor,’ etc. Electronic gadgets mostly belong to this category.

**Loanword.** When the foreign words are integrated, and the spelling is adapted to the Indonesian system of orthography they are called loan words. For example, ‘komputer,’ ‘bolpoin,’ - (‘ball point’), ‘sopir’ - (‘chauffeur’), etc.

#### **Partial Substitution.**

They are “composite words, in which one part is borrowed, another one substituted” (Wikipedia). For example, ‘anti-peluru’ – ‘bullet-proof’ – ‘anti’ is an English loanword and ‘peluru’ is Indonesian.

#### **Substitution**

Substitution refers to meaning shifts in loanwords and loan coinage.

**Meaning shifts in loanwords.** The word, ‘gentle’ is used to mean ‘gentleman’ (a man who is polite and behaves well towards other people (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary,



2005, p. 530) ‘travel’ means an intercity door to door service car originally belonging to a travel agent.

**Loan coinage.** This kind of substitution is divided into loan translation, loan rendering, and loan creation:

***Loan translation.*** It is also called calquing (see Wikipedia). It is “the translation of the elements of the foreign word” (Loanword. Wikipedia). In other words the idea is borrowed, but the words are Indonesian, for example ‘skyscraper’ is translated into ‘pencakar langit’ (‘sky’ – ‘langit’; ‘scraper’-‘pencakar’; ‘darah biru’ – ‘blue blood’ – (this is in turn from Spanish ‘sangre azul’), and ‘cuci otak’ – ‘brain wash.’

***Loan rendering.*** It is “the translation of part of the elements of the foreign word” (Loanword, Wikipedia); for example ‘pompanisasi’ – ‘pompa’ – ‘pump’ + suffix ‘-isasi’ from ‘-isatie’ Dutch or ‘-ization’ – English, meaning to use pump to get water to water rice-fields. The suffix ‘-isasi’ is a prolific suffix borrowed from Dutch as it saves a number of Indonesian words to express a concept.

***Loan creation.*** It is “a coinage independent of the foreign word, but created out of the desire to replace a foreign word” (Wikipedia); for example ‘pramugari’ is used to replace ‘stewardess.’ However, the word ‘pramuniaga’ is now replaced by the English word SPG for ‘Sales Promotion Girl’ or simply ‘sales.’

***Loan meaning.*** It is an “indigenous word to which the meaning of the foreign word is transferred” (Loanword. Wikipedia), for example ‘tetikus’ for ‘computer mouse,’ but this word ‘tetikus’ fails to be popular and people still use ‘mouse,’ probably because it is shorter and it is already integrated into Indonesian. The same fate falls on the words ‘sangkil’ and ‘mangkus’ for

‘effective’ and ‘efficient,’ the words ‘efektif’ and ‘efisien’ are popularly used in society whereas ‘sangkil’ and ‘mangkus’ are virtually unknown.

### **English Influence**

#### **Phonological and orthographical confusion.**

Here are some causes of confusion:

**Different Phonological Systems.** English is a stressed-time system and Indonesian is a syllable-stressed system. An utterance in English normally has one major stress, be it a word or a phrase. In Indonesian every syllable is stressed, the penultimate syllable is ordinarily stressed more. Stress is phonemic in English, but not phonemic in Indonesian. Stress in English is dynamic, it can change its place depending on context. Strong pressure from the Indonesian syllable patterns, for example Indonesian CVCV pattern, resulting in an English word being wrongly stressed.

**Different underlying principles of writing systems.** English orthography is not phonemic. Indonesian is more or less phonemic, thus the spelling is more predictable

#### **Borrowing is a process of adoption and adaptation.**

All of these factors ascribe to confusion in pronouncing and spelling English loanwords. Confusion occurs in pronunciation and spelling.

- Spelled and pronounced the same as English: ‘monitor’
- Spelled and pronounced almost the same ‘discount’ – ‘diskon’; ‘radio’ – [ra:dio].
- Spelled the same but pronounced differently [lɔʝin] for ‘login,’ [dɔnlo:t] – ‘download,’ [aplo:t] – ‘upload,’ [kipet] – ‘keypad.’ These pronunciations attribute to the Indonesian phonology where final voiced consonants [-g] [-b] and [-d] do not exist; and [ɔ] and [o:] are allomorphs of the same phoneme. [lɔʝin] for ‘log in’ is an

example of analogy as the word ‘gin’ is pronounced [jin], so in the mind of most Indonesians ‘login’ ‘should’ be pronounced [lɔjin].

- Spelled differently but pronounced almost the same, e.g. ‘bolpoin’ for ‘ballpoint.’
- Totally adapted to Indonesian phonological and orthographical system so that it is difficult to trace the original word, for example ‘sekokbreker’ – ‘shockbreaker,’ ‘beking’ – ‘backing’
- Strong pressure from Indonesian major syllable pattern CVCV, for example, ‘helem’ – ‘helm,’ ‘setasiun’ – ‘station’ (originally from Dutch), ‘Setar Bak’ – ‘Starbuck.’
- Pronounced as spelled, for example ‘blunder’ is pronounced [blu:nder] in Indonesian.
- Unconsciously combining Dutch and English, e.g. ‘fotogenic’- ‘foto’ (Dutch- ‘photo’ – English; ‘-genic’ – English suffix)
- Misunderstanding: Indonesians may misunderstand and think that borrowed words are originally English, when in fact they are of Dutch origin. As a result they want to keep the ‘original English,’ for example ‘under steel’ for Dutch ‘onderstel,’ a technical term referring to car repair, which is actually not found in English.

As a consequence of these developments, Indonesians who do not know English would today find it difficult to understand general reading materials such as newspapers and magazines as the number of English loanwords is mind-boggling.

### **Grammatical construction**

Generally speaking, Indonesians who know English but are not familiar with parts of speech would get confused when they have to use English, so it is common to see an English noun used as a verb, e.g. ‘mempromosikanmobil’ - \*to promotion a car – promotion (noun)

mem+promosi+ kan) . English nouns are usually used to create new Indonesian verbs, the process is as follows:

- Creating Indonesian verbs using loanwords:
  - Prefix+noun [verb+ing] loanword+suffix
- For example ‘Meloading’ - it is a hybrid word: ‘me-’ verbal prefix in Indonesian, meaning ‘to,’ plus ‘load+ing’, thus we have ‘me-load-ing’. Another example is “Album singlenyasudah di-launching” (JawaPos, 19 April 2011) – “His single album has been launched,” thus ‘dilaunching’ is a hybrid also (‘di + launch + ing): ‘di-’ is a passive marker in Indonesian, ‘launch+ing’ is an English gerund. Indonesians do not seem to care (or do not understand) the grammatical characteristics of the –ing form, thus the confusing combination.
  - Prefix+noun [-tion ending]+suffix
- English nouns are commonly affixed to create new verbs in Indonesian, for example ‘mengakomodasikan’ –\*to accommodation - ‘to accommodate’ (‘meng+akomodasi [accommodation]+ kan), ‘mengeksekusi’(‘meng-eksekusi [‘execution’]) –‘to execute.’
- Suffix change, from Dutch suffix ‘-ir’ (originally ‘-eer) to ‘-isasikan’, e.g. ‘dikonfrontir’ –(‘to be confronted’) – ‘dikonfrontasikan’ - \*to be confrontation,’ ‘memanipulir’- (‘to manipulate’) – ‘memanipulasi(kan)’-\*to manipulation (see above)
- Suffix ‘-isasi’ is originally derived from Dutch ‘-isatie’ (E. ‘-ization.’) , for example ‘pompanisasi’ < E.\*pumpization – ‘to use pump to draw water to water ricefields,’ ‘hilirisasi’ – ‘to multiply downstream manufacturing.’

- The order of English noun phrase (adjective+noun) is the reverse of Indonesian noun phrase (noun+adjective), Indonesians frequently make mistakes in this case, for example ‘garden flower’ and ‘flower garden’ can be confusing to Indonesians.

### **Vocabulary**

Some of the reasons for using English loanwords:

- (a) The need for new vocabulary items for newly invented things due to the advancement of science and technology. The terms available for these items are mainly in English.
- (b) Because the production of new articles, especially electronic gadgets, is so fast that Indonesians (linguists, especially terminologists) cannot keep up with them, so they cannot create new terms in Indonesian. Indonesian itself would have no words for new items and the easiest way-out is to adopt and adapt English words.
- (c) A great deal of the mental diet (reading materials) of authorities and decision makers in the government and non-government institutions is English, so it is only understandable that when media reporters interview them, they use quite a few English words because the words that are on the tip of the tongue of the authorities are mainly English.
- (d) Reporters who interview them would have no time to check them (or do not bother checking them?) in the dictionary as they have to meet the deadline, so they just reproduce the English words used by the interviewee, rightly or wrongly.
- (e) Impatience or laziness to find Indonesian equivalents.
- (f) Some people use English words to show off to improve their status symbol.
- (g) Neologism: there are three types of neologism in relation to loanwords: (a) extrapolated neologism, (b) abbreviated loanword neologism, and (c) abbreviated combined Indonesian and loanword neologism.

- a. Extrapolated neologism: Creating neologisms (new words) by drawing analogy from the existing word pattern using loanwords. As mentioned above, the English suffix of ‘-ity’ is changed into ‘-itas’ in Indonesian, for example ‘creativity’ – ‘kreatifitas,’ ‘quality’ – ‘kualitas,’ etc. Based on this pattern, Indonesians draw analogy to create new words along the same lines, that is loanword plus the suffix ‘-itas.’ However, English has no such words, for example ‘rutinitas’ < E.\*routinity, ‘sportifitas’ < E.\*sportivity.
- b. Abbreviated loanword neologism: the new words consist of partial loanwords, for example ‘ponsel’ < ‘telpon seluler’ < E. ‘cellular telephone’ ‘hape’ < ‘HP’ (Indonesian pronunciation [hapé]) < ‘handphone.’
- c. Indonesian and loanwords are combined to form new abbreviations: The new words consist of partial Indonesian and partial loanwords, for example ‘warnet’ < Indonesian ‘warung internet’ < E. ‘internet stall’, ‘wartel’ < Indonesian ‘warung telpon’ < E. ‘telephone stall’ the components of these neologisms are Indonesian (‘warung’ – ‘stall, kiosk’) and English loanwords (‘internet,’ ‘telpon’). The ‘rule’ in developing abbreviations is ‘no rule’ – as long as the new abbreviation sounds pleasant to the ear, it is usually accepted by society at large.

**Further developments in vocabulary are as follows:**

- Even if a word has several meanings, a loanword usually refers to only one meaning, that is the most frequent meaning.
- Not understanding the grammar of English words and parts of speech makes the patterns of loanwords confusing, for example noun (E) is used as a verb in Indonesian.

- Shifts of meaning can occur, for example ‘nuansa’ < E. ‘nuance’, but in Indonesian it means ‘ambience’ or ‘atmosphere.’ Another example is ‘Dicari marketing’ (Wanted: marketers):

First, the misconception of the word ‘marketing,’ quite a few Indonesians are ignorant of the parts of speech in English, such as the difference between noun and verb, adjective and adverb, etc. Small wonder therefore that they make mistakes by confusing those parts of speech. Instead of ‘marketers’, they just use the word ‘marketing’, especially since most probably they have hardly ever heard of the word ‘marketers.’ In addition, due to habits, now the meaning of ‘marketing’ shifts from the process to the doer, that is the person doing the marketing. The same holds true for the word ‘sales,’ which now shifts its meaning to become the person doing the marketing, instead of the process. Another example of meaning shift is ‘travel’ – a door to door transportation service using a car to take people from one city to another.

- Clipping: to cut a noun phrase into one lexical item, for example ‘remote control’ becomes ‘remote,’ ‘matic’ – for ‘automatic motorcycle.’

### **Future Indonesian in Relation to English**

The future Indonesian may have the following characteristics: (a) using as much as twenty five percent of English loanwords, (b) the loanwords are adoptions and adaptations of English words, and (c) adaptations occur in all components of language (pronunciation, spelling, grammar [including more active sentences], vocabulary, loan translation, and shifts of meaning).

In the immediate future, there will be an avalanche of English words in Indonesian that the loanwords need to be accommodated in a separate dictionary such as the case in Japan. There are

so many English words in Japanese ('gairago') that it requires the making of a separate dictionary.

In the far future, Indonesian may be so much inundated with English words that it can hardly be called Indonesian anymore, probably the best name would be Bahasa Indonesia Hibrida (Hybrid Indonesian), a mixture of Indonesian and English.

Another looming language ready to swallow Indonesian is Chinese as Chinese will be a gigantic economic power, defeating the US and many other established countries. In terms of the tense system, Chinese is similar to Indonesian, thus grammatically it would be relatively 'easy' for Indonesian in terms of the tense system. The only drawback of Chinese is the tones and the writing system that may obstruct its advances as a global language.

### **Hybrid Language: Indonesian English or English Indonesian?**

The following are some samples to show how many English loanwords are used in short texts:

#### **(a) Advertisement**

"AHA! Gadget baru internetan tanpa buffering. AHA link portable hotspot untuk 5 gadget wifi berbeda. Gadget wifi-mu langsung connect ke internet super cepat up to 3.1 Mbps. Free unlimited download ribuan lagu dengan akses cepat up to 3.1 Mbps di modem serba bisa."  
(JawaPos, 1 February 2011) (42 words: Indonesian 14 [5.88%], loanwords 25 [10.5%])

#### **(b) Kombinasi menarik**

"Tidak perlu membeli setelan mahal setelah mendapat panggilan (job application, ES). Daripada suit yang berkesan super formal, penampilan rileks membuat Anda tampak lebih percaya diri. Pilih bawahan klasik, seperti rok pensil atau high waisted pants, lalu padukan dengan cardigan atau blazer. Bahkan printed blouse pun oke asal ditambahkan aksesoris yang



pas, seperti statement necklace atau belt.” (JawaPos, 17 April 2011). (57 words: Indonesian 24 words [13.68%], 19 loanwords [10.83%])

The borrowed words are: ‘kombinasi’ (‘kombinatie’ – Dutch; ‘combination’ Eng.); ‘setelan’ (Dutch ‘stel’ – set); ‘suit’; ‘superformal’; ‘rileks’ – ‘relax’; ‘klasik’ (Dutch)- (‘Classic’- Eng.); ‘rok’ (‘jurk’-Dutch); ‘pensil’ (‘pencil’); ‘high waisted pants’ ; ‘kardigan’ (‘cardigan’); ‘blazer’ ; ‘printed blouse’ ; ‘oke’ (‘Ok’-‘okay’); ‘aksesori’ – ‘accessory’; ‘pas’ (Dutch); ‘statement necklace’; ‘belt.’ (See more samples in the Appendices)

### **Can we protect Indonesian from the onslaught of English words?**

Sadly, the answer is definitely no. Actually, there are already rules prescribed by the National Language Center (‘PusatBahasa’) regarding loanwords, but people may not be aware of them or they simply could not care less. The power of English is too overwhelming and too powerful to prevent like tsunami. Any efforts to police the language with whatever method would simply fail. What we can do is to change our attitude and to be more open-minded, that is we have to be willing to accept change, because language is dynamic, it is always changing all the time. To appease our nationalistic emotion, we have to be willing to accept the fact that “No modern language is pure.” The Japanese who are well-known for their staunch attitude against foreign culture also capitulate in terms of foreign language influence. We also have to learn from the French trying to prevent the influence of English by law, they also fail. Even Indonesian is not exactly a pure language (see above) and English itself contains a great deal of borrowed words from languages of the world, including Indonesian such as ‘batik,’ ‘kampong,’ ‘kris,’ ‘orang-utan,’ and ‘nasigoreng.’ We cannot afford to be narrow-minded anymore in the era of globalization.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, linguistic imperialism here refers the inevitable influx of English words in Indonesian. The imperialism, however, is not coerced, but invited due to a number of reasons such as economic necessity, catching up with the latest development of science and technology, time pressure, and snobbery. The avalanche of English words is so powerful and overwhelming that it is unpreventable and inevitable. Indonesian of the immediate future will probably consist of 25% English words and 75% Indonesian, but the percentage of English words will be ever increasing and the percentage of Indonesian will be decreasing in the long run. Indonesian will not vanish or become endangered, but it will survive having a different form. Indonesians will continue attempting to find Indonesian equivalents of English words, but the success rate may be minimal. Any attempt to control the 'purity' of Indonesian will never succeed. One of the best solutions is to have an attitude of broad-mindedness to accept the fact that there is no such thing as pure language and that language is dynamic and forever changing.

The implication of the phenomenon of English hegemony in Indonesian is that Indonesians, willingly or not, have to learn English as Indonesian will consist of a lot more English loanwords. Nowadays those who graduate only from the elementary school never learning English would find it difficult to read and understand the sample texts in the appendices below.

Honestly, Indonesian is in fact a language imperialist also. Actually Indonesian has been extremely successful, but at the expense of indigenous languages. Quite a few Indonesian indigenous languages have died or are dying or losing the battle against Indonesian because Indonesian brings more economic benefits than their own indigenous language. For example, less and less young Javanese understand and let alone can use the high Javanese speech level

(Krama Inggil) as they are more exposed to Indonesian in the four skills than to Javanese. In addition, Javanese does not bring so much economic benefit as Indonesian.

To conclude, the slogan “Pakailah Bahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar” (“Use the correct and appropriate Indonesian”) cannot stand ‘linguistic imperialism’ anymore. ‘Linguistic imperialism’ is here to stay.

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### Appendices

Based on the following brief quotations, the number of loanwords has become ‘alarming.’ The following are some sample texts in Indonesian just to show us how many English loanwords are found in them. Notice that the writers do not only use English loanwords, but also sentences, so it is already code-switching from Indonesian to English. These could signify the trend of Indonesian in the future.

#### **DheaAnanda, artis**

“Little girl in a shopping arena! Dhea tampil seperti gadis remaja yang sedang jatuh cinta. Gaya baby-doll dress dengan detail sunray pleats atau lipit menyebar dari satu titik. Permainan potongan dua warna membuat detail busana itu terlihat unik. Mom’s bag, ring, dan hair styling menjadi komposisi yang menarik. Secara keseluruhan penampilan Dhea keren, tapi NOT THE TREND YET.” (62 words: Indonesian 37 [22.94%], English loanwords 25 [15.5%])

EmbranNawawi

JawaPos, 17 April 2011

#### **Naysilla Mirdad, Bintang sinetron**

“Congrats ya atas setahun butiknya. Kamu memang cocok jadi pemilik butik. Blus warna peach dengan Indonesian necklace yang sedang ngetren membuat kamu terlihat manis. Apalagi dipadu dengan jegging jeans legging) biru tua. Itu cocok sekali. Wow, saya senang sekali dengan pilihan leather belt with gold buckle yang membuat Nay terlihat sophisticated. Semoga sukses, yaa.” (56 words: Indonesian 36 [20.16%], Englishloanwards 20 [11.2%])

Ivo Ananda

JawaPos, 17 April 2011

### **Aksesori Menawan**

“Aksesori memegang peranan penting dalam melengkapi total look Anda. Yang paling penting dari perhiasan, baik asli maupun imitasi, jangan sampai terlihat murahan. Cirinya, warnanya soft dan tidak mencolok. Coba untaian batu yang berbeda atau sekalian model yang tidak match untuk tampilan yang sophisticated, tapi modern.” (27 words: Indonesian 19 [5.13%], English loanwords 9 [2.43%])

Fashion, JawaPos, 17 April 2011

### **Redefinisi Smart Phone**

“... Di balik kemampuannya yang mampu mengintegrasikan fungsi informasi dan komunikasi secara mobile, para vendor ponsel dan pabrikan software serta komponen terkait telah melakukan berbagai inovasi agar ponsel besutan mereka benar-benar smart dan diminati pasar. Mereka tidak saja meningkatkan kemampuan prosesor (sic. Should be ‘prosesor’.ES) agar dapat mengeksekusi aplikasi-aplikasi berat secara smooth, tetapi mendongkrak kapasitas memori hingga 8 Mb lebih. Dengan demikian ratusan data dan program bisa selalu Anda bawa dan gunakan kapanpun dan dimanapun.” (81 words: Indonesian 54 [43.74], English loanwords 27 [21.87%])

Digicom.Edisi 101. Mei 2009

### **Scoopy on The Street Pro MotorAraya**

“Touring motor matic Honda kian marak dilakukan. Sebab, komunitas dan penggunaanya semakin banyak. Untuk mengakomodasi keinginan customer tersebut, PT MPN Malang sebagai main dealer Honda memberikan kebijakan di tiap dealer Honda harus menggelar touring untuk matic.” (43 words: Indonesian 26 [11.18%], English loanwords 17 words [7.31%])

JawaPos, 22 April 2011

**Andien, Penyanyi**

“Potongan dress yang classy and elegant bikin Andien terlihat lebih poise (sic. Should be ‘poised’) dan dewasa. Tapi I HATE the shoes! Basic heels hitam bakal terlihat oke dengan dress itu. Tapi, instead, dia pilih flat shoes merah yang modelnya kasual abis. Sepatunya terlalu kasual, no elegance. Lain kali, sepatunya dipakai untuk pergi ke mal saja, ya! Good choice of dress. BAD SHOES.” (60 words: Indonesian 32 [19.2%] words, loanwords 28 [16.8%] words).

Lisa Purnomo

Fashion, JawaPos, 24 April 2011